

# Dedicated Historian Helps Old Cabin Get New Home

Bountiful City Council member and teacher Leslie Foy stands next to the 1854 log cabin he helped save from wrecking ball.

Rick Egan/The Salt Lake Tribune

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By Michael Nakoryakov  
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Jeremiah Willey's log cabin was just one of about a hundred similar pioneer houses in 1854 in the area now known as Bountiful.

Now, the log cabin is one of a kind. Because of that, it should be preserved as a historical landmark, said Leslie Foy, a member of the Bountiful City Council and a teacher at South Davis Junior High.

His efforts have resulted in a new home for the cabin.

"This cabin is a basic value to the community, and it enhances the integrity of the time period it represents," said Mr. Foy.

He actively campaigned to save the old house, known as "Willey Homestead," from demolition. The home's original site will soon be home to a new parking lot for the expanded South Davis Community Hospital, 500 S. 495

East, Bountiful.

"It would be a shame if a 138-year-old historical construction is torn down for a parking lot," he said. Although most Bountiful residents are not aware of the cabin's existence, Mr. Foy, a historian, has been interested in it for years.

The cabin's demise was averted in July when hospital administrator Gordon Bennett agreed to have it moved to a corner of the proposed parking lot.

But the agreement was short-lived. A month later, the hospital board of directors decided it couldn't afford the move. The Bountiful City Council also was reluctant to pay thousands of dollars for the cabin's relocation and restoration.

The problem? No one knew the cabin's condition.

Long ago, Bountiful resident Grant Heath

attached his home to the cabin and covered the original building with new construction.

"I won't buy something I can't see," Bountiful Councilwoman Renee Coon had said in August.

The council allocated \$500 to dismantle the house covering the cabin to determine what was left of the old building and if it was worth preserving.

Archaeologist Rick Hauck discovered that the original roof and ceiling were intact. "That persuaded everyone," said Mr. Foy.

The city paid a contractor \$6,000 to move the cabin to the Bountiful City Park at 400 North and 100 East. Since mid-September, it has attracted dozens of residents not willing to wait for its renovation.

The Davis Heritage Company will furnish the cabin with pioneer antiques collected by the Daughters of Utah Pioneers.

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A pioneer home

Photo — courtesy Lorin F. Wheelwright

